

EQIP Local Ranking Criteria for Clinton County, Indiana

NOTE: Throughout this document a “perennial waterway” is defined as an open ditch, creek, stream, or river that is mapped as a perennial drainage in the Soil Survey of Clinton County, Indiana.

NOTES ON MEASUREMENTS: Where distance is a factor in ranking, distances will be estimated from the 2002 plat map; if there is question or dispute, a closer measurement will be made from FSA aerial photo maps. The shortest distance from any part of a tract to the point of interest will be used to rank the tract for any criterion. Where area is a factor in ranking, acres will be taken from the FSA maps.

Erosion

Soil quality improvement projects that address erosion will be ranked at the local level according to Highly Erodible Land Conservation determinations under the National Food Security Act of 1985, as follows:

High – Any tract with 50% or more of its cropped acreage classified as Highly Erodible Land (HEL) as determined from FSA aerial photo maps

Medium – Any tract with HEL, where HEL makes up less than 50% of the tract’s total cropped acreage, as determined from FSA aerial maps.

Low – Any tract that contains 0% HEL according to FSA records

NOTE: If no record of an HEL determination can be found, an unofficial determination will be made on the tract for ranking purposes using the same 33%-50 acre rule used in official determinations, and using the HEL classes for soil types found in the FOTG Section II. If the tract is predominantly PHEL, a field visit will not be made (as in official determinations), but the tract will automatically be ranked *Medium*.

Forest Management

The following will receive a *High* local rank:

- Any forest stand improvement project
- A project of any size that connects existing woodlots, where a corridor does not already exist
- A project of any size that establishes woodlands on marginal cropland, in particular HEL or floodplain soils, on tracts that contain floodplains, as evidenced by soil survey maps and aerial photos

The following will receive a *Medium* local rank:

- Windbreak, shelterbelt, and other strip plantings that do not connect existing woods

- Woodland establishment on HEL of tracts that do not contain floodplain soils

A *Low* local rank will be given to woodland establishment on soils that are not HEL or flood-prone

Water Quality

We have decided to improve water quality by prioritizing concerns on agricultural operations along waterbodies, as well as promoting specific practices. The conditions for each ranking are listed below.

High local rank:

- Any project that has potential to improve water quality on any tract that borders or contains floodplains (as identified by floodplain soils in the Soil Survey) of an open ditch, creek, stream, or river that is mapped as a perennial drain in the Soil Survey of Clinton County, or on a tract that contains or borders such a drain if floodplains are not associated with the drain.
- In a watershed for which a watershed management plan has been developed, any project that addresses water quality concerns identified in the plan. These include only two 14-digit watersheds: Spring Creek-Lick Run (HUC 05120107040100) and Kilmore Creek-Stump Ditch (HUC 05120107040070).
- Practices with potential to improve water quality on any tract that contains an existing livestock operation and is within ½ mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County
- If cost-share is requested for adoption or improvement to the following practices on any tract: Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Waste Utilization, No-Till. If a written management plan is already being followed, the producer will be asked to submit a copy and, using the plan checklist, it will be evaluated against the NRCS standard. If the NRCS standard is already being met, the practice is ineligible for cost-share and cannot be used for ranking purposes.

Medium local rank:

- Any project that has potential to improve water quality on a tract that is within 1 mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County
- Practices with potential to improve water quality on any tract that contains an existing livestock operation and is within 1 mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County

A *Low* local rank will be given to any proposed project more than a mile from the nearest perennial waterway, except for nutrient and pest management, and waste utilization

Livestock

For **CFO** applications:

- 1) Has the livestock operation developed a written waste management plan or a nutrient management plan that includes waste utilization? *Yes=1 point*
(applicant must provide copy)
- 2) Is waste from the livestock operation applied on any tract within ½ mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County? *Yes=2 pts.*
- 3) Is funding requested for improvements to existing facilities that are within ½ mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey, or within 1000 feet of a tile drainage inlet or water well? *Yes=1 point*
- 4) Is funding requested for a new waste storage or mortality handling facility that will be installed at least 1000 feet from the nearest public water supply source, perennial drainage as mapped in the Soil Survey, tile drainage inlet, or private water well? *1 pt.*
- 5) Is funding requested for manure transfer equipment that will increase the available acreage for waste utilization? *Yes=1 point*
- 6) In association with a practice for which cost-share is requested, is development of a CNMP required by NRCS? *Yes=1 point*

At least 4 points needed for a local rank of *High*.

3 points needed for a local rank of *Medium*.

2 or fewer points result in a local rank of *Low*.

For pastured livestock, ranking will be tied to the local water quality criteria:

High: Cost-share requested for improvements to or establishment of a forage-based operation, where any part of the operation is within ½ mile of a perennial w/w as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County

If cost-share is requested for permanent exclusion of animals from perennial waterways to which they currently have access, the local rank will be *high*

Medium: Improvements to or establishment of an operation, any part of which is within 1 mile of a perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County

Low: Pasture improvement or establishment projects more than a mile from the nearest perennial waterway as mapped in the Soil Survey of Clinton County